

RAMAḌĀN HAS ARRIVED

A Month In Which The Gates Of Paradise Are Opened And The Gates Of The Hellfire Are Locked

Shaykh ʿAbd al-Razzāq Ibn ʿAbd al-Muḥsin al-ʿAbbād

The Month Of Ramaḍān has arrived

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The Month Of Ramaḍān Has Arrived[1]



In the name of Allāh, The Most Merciful, The Beneficent

Indeed all praise is due to Allāh. We praise Him, seek His aid, ask for His forgiveness and repent to Him. We seek refuge with Allāh from the evil of our own souls and from the evil of our wicked actions. Whomsoever Allāh guides, then none can misguide; and whomsoever Allāh misguides, then none can guide.

I testify that none has the right to be worshipped except Allāh, alone without any partner; and I testify that Muḥammad is His slave and Messenger. May abundant peace and blessings be upon him, his family and all of his companions.

To proceed:

Verily, gathering together to remind one another about the affairs of the religion, in general, and to remind one another about the seasons of good, which the Muslims experience, is no doubt from the important affairs that should attract our attention and concern. This is due to the upright practices, great good and copious benefits that result from this [type of congregation], which cannot be counted nor calculated.

[1] [TN]: All chapter headings have been added by the translator.

There comes in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* that the Prophet (ﷺ) went out to his companions one day while they were sitting in the *Masjid* reminding one another. He (ﷺ) said to them:

"Why are you sitting here?"

They responded,

> "We are sitting to remind ourselves of Islam and the blessings that Allāh bestowed upon us."

He (ﷺ) said,

> "By Allāh, are you only sitting for this purpose?"

We said,

> "By Allāh, we are only sitting for this purpose."

He (ﷺ) said,

> "By Allāh, I did not ask you to swear because I am accusing you, but Jibrīl came to me and told me that Allāh mentions you honorably to the angels."[1]

This is an amazing sign for the one whom Allāh has honored and graced to utilize their time in the likes of these circles that are established in the houses of Allāh, which Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) has ordered to be raised and that His name be mentioned therein.

It is incumbent that the Muslim compels himself to be patient with the like of these gatherings and to dedicate some of his time to attend them, so that he can benefit and profit [from this]. If he

[1] Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim (no. 2701). Narrated by Mu'āwīyah (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ).

does not, then he will be occupied, busied, distracted and devoted to his worldly affairs, which have no limits.

Therefore, he will neither possess knowledge of this good, knowledge of its avenues, nor knowledge of the paths through which he can attain this good and attain that which is pleasing to Allāh (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَىٰ).

In these types of gatherings direction [is given], there is admonition, there is a reminder and the hearts are awoken and directed to the doors of good. Thus, the people prosper and benefit, amassing great gains.

Ramadan Is Upon Us

As for the topic that we are currently discussing, then it is concerning the arrival of the month of Ramaḍān. You are all aware that there are only a number of days remaining prior to the start of this blessed month. Then it will appear with its prevalent good, noble merits, and successive blessings.

The month of Ramaḍān is shortly approaching and its arrival is very important to all Muslims. It is something endeared to them, because they yearn for its coming and they anticipate its arrival.

They rejoice when it is close and give each other glad tidings when it actually arrives, due to what they know about this great blessed month from the amazing good and unique qualities, which are specific to this month, which distinguishes it from the other months of the year.

Whosoever Allāh the (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) honors, and their appointed time is prolonged and their lifespan is extended to reach and meet this month, then it is a great blessing for the servant to participate with the people of Islam and to harvest the fruits of this great season. This season of obedience, faith, and devotion to the Most Merciful.

A Blessed Month

There comes in the authentic Sunnah that the Prophet (ﷺ) used to give glad tidings to his companions on the arrival of this month. It has been narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) would say to his companions,

قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ ، شَهْرٌ مُبَارَكٌ افْتَرَضَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ صِيَامَهُ ، يُفْتَحُ فِيهِ أَبْوَابُ الْجَنَّةِ ، وَيُغْلَقُ فِيهِ أَبْوَابُ الْجَحِيمِ ، وَتُغَلُّ فِيهِ الشَّيَاطِينُ ، فِيهِ لَيْلَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ ، مَنْ حُرِمَ خَيْرَهَا فَقَدْ حُرِمَ

> "Ramaḍān has come to you, a blessed month, which Allāh has obligated you to fast. In it the gates of Heaven are opened, the gates of Hell are closed, and the devils are chained up. There is a night in it, which is better than a thousand months. Whoever is deprived of its goodness is indeed deprived."[1]

"Ramaḍān has come to you," meaning that this is glad tidings for you and congratulations. And it is news about a marvelous affair, which has materialized for you, and this is that the month of Ramaḍān has come to you while you are in good health, a state of wellbeing, and you are blessed with safety, faith, peace, and Islam.

This is the month of Ramaḍān which has come to you and it is a great season to turn to Allāh, bring oneself to account, to perform

[1] **Ṣaḥīḥ:** Related by Aḥmad (no. 7148) and al-Nasā'ī (no. 2106). Narrated by Abu Hurairah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ).

acts of obedience to Allāh (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَىٰ), and to stay far away from those things that Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) has forbidden.

This statement comprises of words that move the hearts to sense the worth, station, and lofty standing of this month. So get ready and prepare for its arrival, and meet it with the best reception and host it with the best form of hospitality.

People give one another glad tidings on the arrival or coming of important and significant events so they can prepare and get ready for them.

The month of Ramaḍān is an esteemed guest and a respected visitor to the soul of every believer. Every believer rejoices with the delight felt at the arrival of the most notable of guests and noblest of visitors.

Imagine a generous man who relishes to be generous, give, spend, and be benevolent when an esteemed guest visits him, who is of high repute and elevated standing.

How would he receive a guest of this standing? How delighted would he be at his presence? How hospitable would he receive someone like this?

His saying (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ),

"Ramaḍān has come to you," meaning prepare to host this noble guest and prepare to welcome him with the best hospitality and to fulfill his rights.

And get yourselves ready to do this, because as he arrives quickly he also quickly departs. So prepare yourselves for this and get yourselves ready to carry out these praiseworthy actions,

excellent acts of obedience and forms of worship that you would love to meet your Lord (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَىٰ) with.

The Muslim should welcome the month of Ramaḍān properly. This is something in which the people differ greatly: the way that they welcome the month of Ramaḍān.

The First Group Of People

One group of people meet this month by focusing on the market places so that they can buy different types of foods, edibles, and the most delicious dishes.

They compete in the market places and buy foods and edibles in enormous quantities, as if they are greeting a month of eating, drinking, and purchasing food.

So they buy more food in this month [than normal] to the extent that shopping and the purchasing of food in the month of Ramaḍān with many families increases past their needs and requirements.

This is why you find some of them - especially the people of extravagance - wasting stunning amounts [of food]. He places numerous types of food on his plate and dining table and he only eats a small amount of it. This is one group of people.

The Second Group Of People

Another group of people, when the month of Ramaḍān arrives they prepare for themselves different forms of games, amusements, and distractions.

They ready for themselves things that will occupy their precious time in the month of Ramaḍān, wasting and squandering their time with things which are of no benefit.

Rather, many times they waste their time with things which are known to be harmful and detrimental. They prepare the likes of these things and ready themselves adequately before the arrival of Ramaḍān.

The One Whom Allāh Has Granted Success

There is another group of people whom Allāh has graced with success and He has preserved them by way of His care and He has protected them by way of His providence. Thus, they start to prepare themselves properly for Ramaḍān.

You find that one of them has plenty of ideas and he thinks of many different ways to do good. He starts by allocating time for the Qur'ān, time for the remembrance of Allāh, time for praying the night prayer, time for assisting the poor, time for spending, and time for attending the circles of knowledge. All of these things consume his time.

Some people feel that the month of Ramaḍān is too short, as they have many plans, numerous actions and vast opportunities to perform acts of obedience to Allāh (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَىٰ). However, [they feel that] the month of Ramaḍān is too short for them and it is not long enough for all the doors of good that lie therein.

There are some people who treat the month of Ramaḍān as they treat any other month. So the month of Ramaḍān passes him by just as the rest of the other months pass him by. Even the night that is mentioned in the Qur'ān as being superior to a thousand months passes by many of the people just like the other nights of the year.

This is a heavy loss, clear stupidity and a waste [of an opportunity], which it is not befitting for the Muslim to waste and squander. It is upon the Muslim to greet this month properly, to receive it hospitably and prepare himself for it so that he can truly and deservedly be from the people of this month.

There comes in the *Sunan of al-Tirmidhī* in a *ḥadīth* narrated by Abu Hurairah (رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُ) from the Prophet (صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ) that he said,

إِذَا كَانَ أَوَّلُ لَيْلَةٍ مِنْ شَهْرِ رَمَضَانَ صُفِّدَتِ الشَّيَاطِينُ وَمَرَدَةُ الْجِنِّ ، وَغُلِّقَتْ أَبْوَابُ النَّارِ فَلَمْ يُفْتَحْ مِنْهَا بَابٌ ، ثُمَّ فُتِحَتْ أَبْوَابُ الْجِنَانِ فَلَمْ يُغْلَقْ مِنْهَا بَابٌ ، وَيُنَادِي مُنَادٍ : يَا بَاغِيَ الْخَيْرِ أَقْبِلْ ، وَيَا بَاغِيَ الشَّرِّ أَقْصِرْ ، وَلِلَّهِ عُتَقَاءُ مِنَ النَّارِ ، وَذَلِكَ فِي كُلِّ لَيْلَةٍ

> "When the first night of Ramaḍān comes the devils and rebellious Jinn are chained up; and the gates of the Hellfire are closed and none of its gates are opened. The gates of Paradise are opened and none of its gates are closed. And a caller cries out: "O seeker of good, come forth; O seeker of evil, stop." And Allāh frees a people from the fire; and this happens every night."[1]

Reflect over the saying of the Prophet (صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ),

وَيُنَادِي مُنَادٍ : يَا بَاغِيَ الْخَيْرِ أَقْبِلْ

"And a caller cries out, 'O seeker of good, come forth,'" meaning that you have surely met a season for good and a season to perform acts of obedience, so turn to it with the utmost diligence and pay close attention to it. And beware, beware of missing out on this splendid opportunity that is before you. For indeed Ramaḍān is a lucrative season to perform good and its commerce is lucrative, but if the opportunity is lost it will not return.

[1] **Ṣaḥīḥ:** Related by al-Tirmidhī (no. 682) and Ibn Mājah (no. 1642). Shaykh al-Albānī declared it to be *Ṣaḥīḥ*.

وَيَا بَاغِيَ الشَّرِّ أَقْصِر

"O seeker of evil, stop," meaning that it is not befitting for the one who seeks evil or he yearns for evil to give his soul the chance to persist in its evil, to be immersed in its sin, and to continue upon its misguidance during this blessed and noble season.

Anyone whose soul does not yearn to turn to Allāh (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَىٰ), to repent, and show remorse when this noble month arrives, then when will his soul yearn for this? Many people are overcome by distractions, temptations, and entertainment, and these things are an obstacle and a stumbling block, preventing them from repenting and returning to Allāh.

This type of person awakes in the morning and sleeps in the evening and he is in a state of opulence and luxury, extravagance and waste, play and amusement, sleep and laziness, and oppression and wickedness.

Therefore, the month of Ramaḍān is an opportunity for those who are heedless in this manner to sincerely repent and turn to Allāh. If the soul does not yearn to repent in this great season, then when will it yearn to repent? If the servant does not turn to Allāh in this blessed month, then when will he turn to Allāh?

Allāh Frees A People From The Hellfire

His statement (ﷺ),

وَلِلَّهِ عُتَقَاءُ مِنَ النَّارِ ، وَذَلِكَ فِي كُلِّ لَيْلَةٍ

> "Allāh frees a people from the Hellfire; and this happens every night."

Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) liberates a people from the fire of *Jahannam* every night during the nights of this noble month. The Muslim covets to attain this great success, which is for his neck to be liberated from the fire - may Allāh protect us from it.

On certain occasions, they advertise in some places competitions and prizes. Every day there is a prize: 1,000 *Riyals* or more or less. You find the people competing in these [competitions] with fierce greed, avidity, and intense dedication.

Each person enters, spends, and exerts himself to win this 1,000 *Riyals* or more or less so that he can be from the winners. However, when it pertains to success in the hereafter and a reward on the Day of Judgment, the desire is weak, the determination is flimsy, and the will of the people wavers as it relates to this noble affair.

Whereas, it is befitting the Muslim when he hears the saying of the Prophet (ﷺ),

"Allāh frees a people from the fire; and this occurs every night," to yearn for this, to be determined to be from among them, to be serious and strive, and to ask Allāh to free his neck from the fire;

and to turn to Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ). So that he can successfully achieve this magnificent promise and attain this great reward.

There comes in another Hadith that the Prophet (صَلَّاللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ) described this month as the month of patience. He said,

صَوْمُ شَهْرِ الصَّبْرِ وَ ثَلاثَةِ أَيَّامٍ مِنْ كُلِّ شَهْرٍ صَوْمُ الدَّهْرِ

> "Fasting the month of patience and three days each month is like fasting the whole year."[1]

So he described it as the month of patience. This means that there is a splendid opportunity for the Muslim to train himself to be patient in this noble month and to get himself accustomed to being patient, with all the different forms of patience: patience upon the obedience of Allāh, patience in staying away from disobeying Allāh, and patience with the decree of Allāh (تَبَارَكَوَتَعَالَىٰ) which the servant finds painful.

Thus, it is a season of patience. And Allāh will reward the patient in full without any reckoning. The month of Ramaḍān is a season, which is the greatest season of patience.

The Muslim should start from the very first day of the days of this blessed month, accustoming himself to being patient: patience with worship, obedience, the remembrance of Allāh, the Qur'ān, the Prayer, fasting, and the other [types of worship] that Allāh (تَبَارَكَوَتَعَالَىٰ) has commanded His servants with. He should train

[1] **Ṣaḥīḥ:** Related by Aḥmad (no. 7568) and al-Nasā'ī (no. 2408). Shaykh al-Albānī declared it to be *Ṣaḥīḥ*.

himself to be patient in staying away from the disobedience of Allāh.

The servant abandons his customary practices and things that he normally does from food, drink, and other than that during the day of Ramaḍān, and he is patient with this out of obedience to Allāh (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى).

If the Muslim is patient in the month of fasting and he abstains from things that Allāh has made lawful for him [at other times], because Allāh declared them to be unlawful during the days of the month of Ramaḍān, then let him understand that Allāh has declared the forbidden matters to be unlawful throughout his whole life and entire lifespan.

So it is upon him to refrain from what Allāh has forbidden and to abstain from these things permanently, fearing the punishment of Allāh which He has prepared for those who oppose His command and commit what He has prohibited them from.

Furthermore, he should train himself to be patient with the decree of Allāh, even if it is painful. The abandonment of food and drink while the soul craves them and likewise restraining the soul from that which Allāh has made lawful from lust and enjoyment, like sexual relations and foreplay helps to perfect this patience.

The Muslim should live this month patiently until they have graduated from it and they have taken great lessons in patience and they have become accustomed to many of the doors of good.

In this way the benefit of this month upon the individual will not solely be in this month alone; rather, the blessings and good of

this month will be yielded throughout his whole life and entire life span. This is because he trained his soul to be patient and he accustomed it to patience; and he lived with patience in the greatest of its seasons.
If the Muslim does not adorn himself with patience in the greatest of its seasons then when will he be patient?

For this reason, among the very important issues that the Muslim should pay close attention to is to train himself to be patient in this noble month with all the types of patience: patience upon the obedience of Allāh, patience in staying away from the disobedience of Allāh, and patience upon the decrees of Allāh, which the individual finds distressing.

There comes in a ḥadīth that the Prophet (ﷺ) described the month of Ramaḍān as a blessed month. He (ﷺ) said,

أَتَاكُمْ شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ ، شَهْرٌ مُبَارَكٌ فَرَضَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ صِيَامَهُ ، تُفْتَحُ فِيهِ أَبْوَابُ السَّمَاءِ وَتُغْلَقُ فِيهِ أَبْوَابُ الْجَحِيمِ ، وَتُغَلُّ فِيهِ مَرَدَةُ الشَّيَاطِينِ

> "Ramaḍān has come to you, a blessed month, which Allāh has obligated you to fast. In it the gates of Paradise are opened and the gates of the Hellfire are locked. And the rebellious devils are chained up."[1]

The proof from the hadith that is pertinent here is [the part] where the Prophet (ﷺ) describes the month of Ramaḍān as being a blessed month. The blessings of this month are obtained at every one of its moments and every one of its hours, from its

[1] **Ṣaḥīḥ:** Related by al-Nasā'ī (no. 2106). Shaykh al-Albānī declared it to be *Ṣaḥīḥ* in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Targhīb Wa al-Tarhīb* (no. 999).

onset until its departure. So every moment of this month is blessed and it comprises of amazing blessings, great good, and numerous benefits.

From the blessings of this month is that the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) informed us that the doors of Paradise are opened in this month and the doors of the Hellfire are locked; and that the rebellious devils are chained.

This is a blessing that is specific to this month and not found in any of the other months. The gates of Paradise - all of them - are opened and none remain locked; and the gates of the Hellfire are locked - all of them - and none remain open.

The rebellious devils are chained and not one of them can escape and gain access to the people as they are able to get to them outside of this month.

All of these are amazing blessings, which strengthen resolves, awaken determinations and incite the people to turn to the obedience of Allāh.

If we begin to talk about the good of this month, its distinguishing qualities, its virtues, and its lofty status, then it would require from us a great amount of time.

However, I will move on to talk about some of the things we should observe when we meet the month of Ramaḍān and how we should meet the Month of Ramaḍān. So I will present to the noble reader a number of very important points.

We Should Rejoice At The Arrival Of This Month

The first matter:

We should be extremely delighted with this month when it commences and we should be happy with its arrival. It should also have a lofty station and an elevated position in our hearts. And we should praise Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) for blessing us to reach this month.

How many people witnessed the previous Ramaḍān and the months prior to it, but their life came to an end and they did not reach this month, yet they yearned to reach it.

We do not know, as it is possible that some of us will not reach the month of Ramaḍān and it is possible that some of us will reach part of it. Therefore, the Muslim should strive if Allāh (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَىٰ) honors and blesses him to reach this month, and he should strive to praise Allāh (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَىٰ) and thank Him for gracing him to reach this month.

There is no doubt that you reaching this month in a state of health, faith, wellbeing, peace and security is a great blessing and enormous grace, which you should appreciate and know its true worth. Indeed, part of you thanking Allāh for blessing you to reach this great month is to strive in the obedience of Allah, with effort and dedication during this month - may Allāh allow you to reach it. Strive to fulfill the right of Allāh (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَىٰ) during this month from fasting, praying, obedience, devotedness to Allāh and staying far away from the things that Allāh has forbidden.

It was from the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) if he saw the crescent of any of the months of the year to say,

اللَّهُمَّ أَهْلِلْهُ عَلَيْنَا بِالْيُمْنِ وَالْإِيمَانِ وَالسَّلَامَةِ وَالْإِسْلَامِ رَبِّي وَرَبُّكَ اللَّهُ

"O Allāh bring it over us with blessing and faith and security and Islam. My Lord and your Lord is Allāh."[1]

If Allāh honors you and this blessed month enters upon you and you see its crescent, then supplicate with this invocation that is reported, which the Prophet (ﷺ) would supplicate with when seeing the crescent of every month.

This is an amazing supplication in which you ask Allāh to bless your month and to bring it over you with blessing, faith, security from evil and to allow you to fulfill the right of Islam in a manner pleasing to Allāh (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى). No doubt, reaching this month is a great blessing, which requires you to thank Allāh (the Most High) and to fully appreciate its value.

Additionally, from those things that should be observed when we meet this blessed month of Ramaḍān is to meet it with repentance from every sin and offense; and all of us sin. There will certainly emanate from us shortcomings, extravagance, negligence and transgression in some affairs.

[1] **Ṣaḥīḥ:** Related by al-Tirmidhī (no. 3451) and Aḥmad (no. 1397). Shaykh al-Albānī declared it to be *Ṣaḥīḥ*.

An Opportunity To Repent

There comes in the Hadith of the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) that he said,

كُلُّ ابْنِ آدَمَ خَطَّاءٌ وَخَيْرُ الْخَطَّائِينَ التَّوَّابُونَ

> "All of the sons of Ādam sin, and the best of the sinners are those who repent."[1]

So the son of Ādam is surely going to err and fall short, and the best of the sinners are those who repent. The month of Ramaḍān is a tremendous season for repenting to Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ).

How many people were excessive in their affairs, neglected the acts of obedience of Allāh and were involved in numerous evils. However, when the month of Ramaḍān entered upon them, their souls yearned for good and they sensed the vitality of obedience and turning to Allāh; and they found within their hearts remorse for their neglect of the obedience of Allāh.

So they repented to Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) with a sincere repentance. How many people successfully repented sincerely in this great month and they never returned to what they were upon previously from disobedience and negligence.

If the person's soul who is negligent, falling short and wasteful does not move to repent to Allāh in this season, then when will

[1] **Ḥasan:** Collected by al-Tirmidhī (no. 2499) and Ibn Mājah (no. 4251). Shaykh al-Albānī declared it to be *Ḥasan* in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Targhīb Wa al-Tarhīb* (no. 3139).

his soul move to repent? If his feelings are not aroused at times like this, then when will his feelings be aroused?

The month of Ramaḍān is a season for repentance to Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ). So let us meet it repenting sincerely from every sin and offense. Allāh will not accept repentance unless it is a sincere, true repentance. In order for it to be considered true repentance it is incumbent for three conditions to be met:

1. Remorse for committing these sins.
2. Resolve to never return back to them.
3. To renounce them totally.

With these three conditions, Allāh will accept the repentance of His servant if he repents: that he totally renounces the sin, that he is determined and resolved in himself to never return to it, and to show sincere remorse for the occurrence of these sins.

If he repents fulfilling these conditions, then his repentance will be accepted. The scholars add to these three conditions a fourth. This is if the sin involves the rights of other humans like if the individual seized someone's wealth unlawfully, infringed upon one of their rights or the like thereof, then a fourth condition is stipulated for someone in this situation, which is restoration of the right to the one who it belongs to or to seek their pardon.

May Allāh grant us success to repent from all sins and offenses.

From the important affairs that we should pay close attention to in the month of Ramaḍān is the safeguarding of the fast, which is the obligation of the month.

The people differ as it relates to their fast and they are not of the same level, even though they all partake in refraining from food, drink, and the rest of the nullifiers of the fast, from the appearance of Fajr to the setting of the sun.

However, in the completion of their fast, its perfection, and its performance in the best and most complete fashion they differ greatly.

The Prophet (ﷺ) was asked,

فَأَيُّ الصَّائِمِينَ أَعْظَمُ أَجْرًا ؟

> "Who from those who are fasting receives the greatest reward?"

He said,

أَكْثَرُهُمْ ذِكْرًا لِلَّهِ

"Those who remember Allāh the most."[1]

It is known that the fasting people differ greatly as it relates to their diligence with the remembrance of Allāh, with the Qur'ān, and with performing the acts of obedience.

Some people stay awake during the night, wasting and squandering time. Then after they pray *Fajr* – if they safeguard the prayer - they fall into a deep sleep. It is possible that some of

[1] **Ḍaʿīf:** Related by Aḥmad (no. 15614) and al-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* (no. 16812). [TN]: It was declared to be weak by those who checked the *Risālah* print of al-Musnad.

them delay the *Dhuhr* prayer from its appointed time and likewise the prayer of *'Aṣr*.

The people differ greatly as it relates to the quality of the fast. So the Muslim should strive to perfect his fast, complete it, and fill it with the remembrance of Allāh, turning to the obedience of Allāh, observance of the recitation of Qur'ān, attending the sittings of good, and sitting in the *Masjid*. And he should struggle against his soul, striving to do this.

Whoever Fasts The Month Of Ramaḍān Out Of True Faith

From the important matters that the Muslim should pay close attention to when fasting is the establishment of the Prophet's (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) saying:

مَنْ صَامَ رَمَضَانَ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ

> "Whoever fasts the month of Ramaḍān truthfully out of sincere faith and hoping to attain Allāh's reward, all of his past sins will be forgiven."[1]

It is upon the Muslim to fast out of sincere faith and hoping to attain Allāh's reward, not as a custom in accordance to customary practices, meaning that his family, brothers, and friends fast so he fasts as well.

He should not fast to merely prevent criticism (from those around him) and to prevent it from being said that he is not fasting.

He should not fast showing off to the people and out of love for their praise and commendation. Rather, he should solely fast out of sincere faith and awaiting the reward from Allāh, believing in Allāh, believing in what Allāh has promised the fasting people and that Allāh will reward them in full without any reckoning; and believing that Allāh has made the fast compulsory for His servants.

[1] Related by Bukhārī (no. 37) and Muslim (no. 1268).

He fasts in this great month hoping to attain the reward and recompense from Allāh for his fast and for his performance of acts of obedience to Allāh (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَىٰ).

The fasting person receives a great reward and plentiful recompense from Allāh (the Mighty and Majestic).There comes in the *ḥadīth Qudsī* that Allāh said,

الصِّيَامُ لِي ، وَأَنَا أَجْزِي بِهِ

"Fasting is for me and I shall reward for it."[1]

This highlights the great recompense for those who fast and the magnitude of their reward with Allāh. So it is upon the Muslim to have the utmost diligence in safeguarding their fast.

In another *ḥadīth* the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said,

لِلصَّائِمِ فَرْحَتَانِ : فَرْحَةٌ عِنْدَ فِطْرِهِ ، وَفَرْحَةٌ عِنْدَ لِقَاءِ رَبِّهِ

> "The fasting person has two moments of joy that he rejoices in: when he breaks his fast he rejoices and when he meets his Lord he rejoices."[2]

The fasting person rejoices when he meets Allāh (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) on the Day of Judgment, because Allāh has prepared a great reward for those who fast and a magnificent recompense.

[1] Related by Bukhārī (no. 1761) and Muslim (no. 1151).
[2] Related by Bukhārī (no. 1771) and Muslim (no. 1945).

Furthermore, verily Allāh (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى) has designated a specific gate for the fasting people to enter through into Paradise called the gate of *al-Rayyān*, as established in the *Ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth*[1], which is authentically transmitted from the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ).

The Muslim should pay close attention to this issue from the beginning of the month to its end. He should fast out of sincere faith and hoping for the reward of Allāh, believing in Allāh and believing that He has obligated us to fast, and hoping to attain the reward and recompense from Allāh (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى).

[1] Related by Bukhārī (no. 1896) and Muslim (no. 1152).

The Attainment Of Piety

Verily, from the important matters that we should pay close attention to in this month of Ramaḍān is the acquisition of the fear of Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) from, during, and as a result of this month. And this is one of the main reasons fasting was legislated, as Allāh said,

﴿ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ كُتِبَ عَلَيۡكُمُ ٱلصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبۡلِكُمۡ لَعَلَّكُمۡ تَتَّقُونَ ١٨٣ ﴾

> "O you who believe fasting has been prescribed for you like it was prescribed for those who came before you, so that you may attain piety." [Sūrah al-Baqarah: 183]

Through fasting and the performance of this worship the Muslim traverses an immense path and a blessed passage, which leads him to the fear of Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ).

So Ramaḍān is an opportunity for you to take your provisions of piety (for your journey) and for you to be from the pious.

> "*Taqwá* is to perform acts of obedience to Allāh based upon light from Allāh, hoping for the reward of Allāh; and to abandon the disobedience of Allāh based upon light from Allāh, fearing the punishment of Allāh."

Let us pause for a moment to ponder over how fasting results in piety for the servant and how he acquires the provisions of piety over this period of time [i.e. the month of Ramaḍān].

The Muslim throughout the year and all year long is used to doing certain things during the day that they are accustomed to.

They are used to eating breakfast in the morning, they are used to eating lunch, and they are used to various types of drinks, which is a familiar habit during their regular day or days.

As soon as the month of Ramaḍān enters upon him, he abandons these usual practices that he is accustomed to, even though it is the norm for him and he is intimately familiar with them.

However, he abandons them and refrains from them completely. For no other reason except to attain the reward of Allāh (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى). This is piety. You find the fasting person refraining from food and drink that is in front of him, even if he is alone and none of the people can see him.

He does all of this out of obedience to Allāh. What is achieved by the Muslim in the day of Ramaḍān is something that he should further throughout his whole life with every act of obedience that Allāh has commanded with and with every command and prohibition of Allāh.

O you who have refrained from food and drink during the days of Ramaḍān out of obedience to Allāh, it is upon you to refrain from every matter that Allāh has forbidden you from, at all times and moments.

For indeed the Lord of Ramaḍān is the Lord of all the months, whom it is obligatory to obey inside Ramaḍān and it is obligatory to obey Him at all times.

So if you are able to control yourself and withhold your soul from the disobedience of Allāh and you abandoned your normal behavior and things which you were accustomed to out of obedience to Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) during the day of Ramaḍān, then you should train yourself to do this at all times and on all occasions.

Refraining from food, drink and the rest of the nullifiers of the fast is observed during Ramaḍān, meaning the obligation of this, which is from the arrival of *Fajr* to the setting of the sun. As for fasting, refraining and abstaining from the forbidden matters, then the place for this is throughout a person's life.

It is upon you to strive against your soul with a fierce struggle to refrain from every matter Allāh has forbidden you from. If you transgress, go beyond bounds or you fall short, then correct your soul through repentance, turning to Allāh in penitence and returning to Allāh (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى).

Here, let us take note on how we benefit from fasting in the month of Ramaḍān and how this assists us to attain the fear of Allāh, as indeed a person refrains from things he is used to out of obedience to Allāh.

So why doesn't he abstain from the forbidden matters, which Allāh declared forbidden at all times and moments? One of the *Salaf* was asked about a people who worship Allāh in Ramaḍān, safeguarding the obligatory prayers and safeguarding the obligations in the month of Ramaḍān.

However, when Ramaḍān departs they forsake these things and neglect them. So he said,

"How evil are a people who do not know Allāh except in Ramaḍān."

It is obligatory upon the Muslim to be conscious of Allāh and to constantly obey Him, inside of Ramaḍān and outside of it; and this is the meaning of the Saying of Allāh,

﴿ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ ٱلصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٨٣﴾ ﴾

"O you who believe, fasting has been prescribed for you like it was prescribed for those who came before you, so that you may attain piety." [Sūrah al-Baqarah: 183]

This means that through this noble month and through your adherence to the obedience of Allāh you obtain the fear of Allāh (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى). This is why the month of Ramaḍān is a huge opportunity to attain the provisions of piety by way of this month.

Allāh said,

﴿ وَتَزَوَّدُوا۟ فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ ٱلزَّادِ ٱلتَّقْوَىٰ ﴾

"And take a provision (with you) for the journey, but the best provision is piety." [Sūrah: al-Baqarah: 197]

And Allāh said,

﴿إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ أَتْقَىٰكُمْ﴾

"Verily, the most honorable of you with Allāh are those from you with the most piety." [Sūrah al-Ḥujurāt: 13]

So we have a precious opportunity in this noble month to prepare for our journey with the provision of piety and to graduate from the school of Ramaḍān as people who fear Allāh (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى), who are accustomed to adhering to the obedience of Allāh and fulfilling his commands.

Verily, you are astonished with sheer amazement at many people when the month of Ramaḍān arrives they fill the *Masājid* and safeguard the prayers. Then when Ramaḍān departs, they forsake this or they forsake most of it.

You find at certain times such as the *Fajr* prayer that the first row is not full. However, if you attend the *Fajr* prayer in the days of Ramaḍān you will find two or three rows.

Were these individuals dead and only came to life in Ramaḍān, were they traveling and they returned in the month of Ramaḍān, or what? Is it that they do not observe the *Fajr* prayer in congregation except in Ramaḍān? Where are they from observing this worship in all of the months [of the year]?

That is why we say that this is an opportunity for the one whom Allāh has honored and blessed to safeguard the prayer, and their soul has moved towards obedience and worship and they have tasted the sweetness of this month of Ramaḍān to continue upon this throughout their whole life.

So that they can benefit from this noble month and blessed season in order to actualize the meaning of this verse,

﴿كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ ٱلصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٨٣﴾﴾

> "Fasting has been prescribed for you like it was prescribed for those who came before you so that you may attain piety."

Perhaps you may fear Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) through the obedience you carry out and the worship you perform in this noble season.

Based upon this, Ramaḍān is a blessed and illustrious educational school where the pious believers graduate and in which the believers acquire the greatest provision, which continues with them for their entire life and all of their days.

Yet, many people do not benefit from this school -the school of Ramaḍān - as this distinguished period of time passes them by and they live during this term like a dull witted student in his school who graduates but fails to benefit.

On the other hand, the serious, eager believer enters this blessed school and takes educational lessons of faith, which remain with him for his whole life.

I will give you an example of some lessons of Ramaḍān, in addition to what has previously been mentioned. The person

who is afflicted with smoking and indulges in this harmful and filthy practice, which has no benefit whatsoever.

You find him in Ramaḍān, from the arrival of *Fajr* to the setting of the sun, refraining from this habit in totality and staying as far away from it as possible, even though he is accustomed to smoking a great deal. However, during the day of Ramaḍān he refrains from this.

So in reality this is an opportunity for him to give smoking up forever. Many smokers when advised about this make excuse that they are unable to quit smoking. Hasn't he abandoned smoking throughout the days of this distinguished month from the arrival of *Fajr* to the setting of the sun?

This lesson provides him with a great benefit, which is his ability and his strength to quit smoking forever and to never indulge in it.

Similarly, you are astonished and amazed at some people when they break their fast with smoking. He refrains from permissible things out of obedience to Allāh, then when the *Mu'adhin* calls the *Adhān* of *Maghrib* - announcing that it is time to break the fast - he breaks his fast with the disobedience of Allāh. Some of them pray *Maghrib* and harm you with the repugnant smell of smoking.

To the extent that some of them go as far with his sin that they put out their cigarettes at the door of the *Masjid*. They enter the *Masjid* stinking of this foul odor, and harm those praying and harm the angels in the place of obedience and worship. You are amazed at this person.

The whole day they are fasting, not drinking nor eating out of obedience to Allāh, and immediately as the *Mu'adhin* calls the *Adhān* he hastens to this act of disobedience. Smoking is an offense, an act of disobedience, a sin, and forbidden.

A person deserves to be punished for smoking and Allāh will bring him to account for this. The proofs and evidences which establish its impermissibility are many and the scholars have elaborated upon them. Ramaḍān is an opportunity for the smoker and for everyone who falls short and is negligent to benefit from this noble month.

The Month Of The Qur'ān

From the important matters that should be highlighted is paying close attention to the Book of Allāh. From the unique traits of Ramaḍān and distinguishing features is that the Qur'ān was revealed in this blessed month, as Allāh said,

﴿ شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أُنزِلَ فِيهِ ٱلْقُرْءَانُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَٰتٍ مِّنَ ٱلْهُدَىٰ وَٱلْفُرْقَانِ ﴾

> "The month of Ramaḍān in which the Qur'ān was revealed, a guidance for mankind and clear proofs for the guidance and criterion (between right and wrong)." [Sūrah al-Baqarah: 185]

In this month the Qur'ān was revealed. Jibrīl would visit the Prophet in this month to revise the Qur'ān with him, and the Prophet (ﷺ) would revise the Qur'ān with him and recite it to him. Therefore, it is upon the Muslim to pay close attention to the Book of Allāh in this great month, which is the month of the Qur'ān.

When the month of Ramaḍān arrived some of the *Salaf* would leave off much of their normal routine and say,

> "This is solely for reading the Qur'ān and feeding others."

They would focus on the Qur'ān intensely.

Some of them would complete the Qur'ān in a day, some every three days, some every week and some would complete it every ten days. For some people, the month of Ramaḍān arrives and leaves and they have not opened the *Muṣḥaf* except once, twice or three times, but they are concerned about other things, which they watch and view. Indeed, these things have conquered their hearts.

I ask Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) to benefit me and you with this discourse; and that He place it upon all of our scales of good deeds; and that He make it a proof for us and not against us.

[I ask Him] to allow us and you to reach this great month, and to assist us and you to fast and stand in prayer; and to make our actions in this month and at all times sincere and in accordance to the Sunnah of His Prophet (صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ).

[I ask him] to rectify the state of our religion, as in it lies the protection of all our affairs, and to rectify our worldly affairs in which is our livelihood. [I ask Him] to make our hereafter flourishing and prosperous, which is our final destination.

[I ask Him] to make life for us an increase in all that is good and death an escape and relaxation for us from all that is evil. He is the best one to ask and the best one to place hope in.

Allāh knows best. And the peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, and all of his companions.

Our Call to the Ummah

[1]: We believe in Allāh and His Names and Attributes, as they were mentioned in the Book of Allāh and in the *Sunnah* of the Messenger of Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ), without *taḥrīf* (distortion), nor *ta'wīl* (figurative interpretation), nor *tamthīl* (making a likeness), nor *tashbīh* (resemblance), nor *ta'ṭīl* (denial).

[2]: We love the Companions (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ) of the Messenger of Allaah (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), and we hate those who speak against them. We believe that to speak ill of them is to speak ill of the Religion, because they are the ones who conveyed it to us. And we love the Family of the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) with love that is permitted by the *Sharī'ah.*

[3]: We love the People of *Ḥadīth* and all of the *Salaf* of the *Ummah* from *Ahl al-Sunnah.* Imām al-Shāṭibī (d.790H) - رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ - said, "The *Salaf al-Ṣāliḥ*, the Companions, the *tābi'īn* and their successors knew the *Qur'ān*, its sciences and its meanings the best."

[4]: We despise *'ilm al-kalām* (knowledge of theological rhetoric), and we view it to be from amongst the greatest reasons for the division in the *Ummah.*

[5]: We do not accept anything from the books of *fiqh* (jurisprudence), nor from the books of *tafsīr* (explanation of the *Qur'ān*), nor from the ancient stories, nor from the *Sīrah* (biography) of the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), except that which has been confirmed from Allāh or from His Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ). We do not mean that we have rejected them, nor do we claim that we are not in need of them. Rather, we benefit from the discoveries of our Scholars and the jurists and other than them. However, we do not accept a ruling, except with an authentic proof.

[6]: We do not write in our books, nor do we cover in our lessons, nor do we give sermons with anything except the *Qur'ān*, or the authentic and authoritative *ḥadīth.* And we detest what emanates from many books and admonishers in terms of false stories and weak and fabricated *aḥādīth.*

[7]: We do not perform *takfīr* upon any Muslim due to any sin, except *Shirk* with Allāh, or the abandonment of Prayer, or apostasy. We seek refuge in Allāh from that.

[8]: We believe that the *Qur'ān* is the Speech of Allāh, it is not created.

[9]: We hold that our 'obligation is to co-operate with the group that traverses the methodology of the Book and the *Sunnah*, and what the *Salaf* of the *Ummah* were upon; in terms of calling to Allāh (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ), and being sincere in worship of Him, and warning from *Shirk*, innovations, and disobedience, and to advise all of the groups that oppose this.' 'So co-operating upon righteousness and piety (*taqwā*) and mutual advising necessitates warning against evil and not co-operating with the wicked.'

[10]: We do not deem it correct to revolt against the Muslim rulers as long as they are Muslims, nor do we feel that revolutions bring about reconciliation. Rather, they corrupt the community.

[11]: We hold that this multiplicity of present day parties is a reason for the division of the Muslims and their weakness. So therefore we set about 'freeing the minds from the fetters of blind-following and the darkness of sectarianism and party spirit.'

[12]: We restrict our understanding of the Book of Allāh and of the *Sunnah* of the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) to the understanding of the *Salaf* of the *Ummah* from the Scholars of *ḥadīth*, not the blind-followers of their individuals. Rather, we take the truth from wherever it comes. And we know that there are those who claim *Salafīyah*, yet *Salafīyah* is free from them, since they bring to the society what Allāh has prohibited. We believe in 'cultivating the young generation upon this Islām, purified from all that we have mentioned, giving to them a correct Islamic education from the start - without any influence from the disbelieving western education.'

[13]: We believe that politics is a part of the Religion, and those who try to separate the Religion from politics are only attempting to destroy the Religion and to spread chaos.

[14]: We believe there will be no honor or victory for the Muslims until they return to the Book of Allāh and to the *Sunnah* of the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ).

[15]: We oppose those who divide the Religion into trivialities and important issues. And we know that this is a destructive *Daʿwah*.

[16]: We oppose those who put down the knowledge of the *Sunnah*, and say that this is not the time for it. Likewise, we oppose those who put down acting upon the *Sunnah* of the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ).

[17]: Our *Daʿwah* and our *ʿAqīdah* is more beloved to us than our own selves, our wealth and our offspring. So we are not prepared to part with it for gold, nor silver. We say this so that no one may have hope in buying out our *Daʿwah*, nor should he think that it is possible for him to purchase it from us for *dīnār* or *dirham*.

[18]: We love the present day Scholars of the *Sunnah* and hope to benefit from them and regret the passing away of many of them. Imām Mālik said (d.179H) - رَحِمَهُ اللهُ, "The knowledge of *ḥadīth* is your flesh and blood and you will be asked concerning it on the Day of Judgment, so look who you are taking it from."

[19]: We do not accept a *fatwā* except from the Book of Allāh and the *Sunnah* of the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ).

These are glimpses into our *ʿAqīdah* and our *Daʿwah*. So if one has any objection to this, then we are prepared to accept advice if it is truthful, and to refute it if it is erroneous, and to avoid it if it is stubborn rejection. And Allāh knows best.